

Post-9/11 Radiation Monitors and Other Anti-Terror Technology Displayed at Port of Baltimore on its 300th Anniversary

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[contacts for this news release](#)

Washington, D.C.— U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner W. Ralph Basham and Brooks Royster, executive director of the Maryland Ports Administration, announced today the deployment of a mobile radiation portal monitor device at the Port of Baltimore, only the sixth such device deployed at a U.S. seaport. This technology is able to detect dangerous radiological devices or materials that might be smuggled into the U.S. via sea, land or rail.

The announcement highlighted massive security improvements at the Port of Baltimore during its 300th anniversary year. In addition, gamma ray and X-ray inspection technology were on display at the Baltimore port to highlight what Commissioner Basham called Customs and Border Protection's layered approach to keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country.

"Radiation Portal Monitors are a key component of our layered defense," said Commissioner Basham. "The ability to move these systems introduces a new level of flexibility and effectiveness to this defense."

Basham called these in-port monitors just one component of port security. "As impressive as the technology is that we have assembled here at the Port of Baltimore, technology alone is not the magic answer. Intelligence gathering and analysis, a highly trained and dedicated workforce, and partnerships with the trade community and leaders—such as with [Maryland] Gov. [Robert L.] Ehrlich—keep the greater Washington-Baltimore area in the forefront of security innovation."

Port administration director Royster agreed that the latest technology was another step forward for port security. "Under the leadership of Gov. Ehrlich, nothing we do is more important than keeping the Helen Delich Bentley Port of Baltimore safe and secure," Royster said. "These new radiation portal monitors will further enhance the security measures we have already implemented at our port, while not impeding the flow of cargo. We also are pleased to hear that these machines will soon be found in ports all across our nation."

The mobile or portable monitor enables screening technology to be mounted on a vehicle and moved throughout the port, or to other sites, making the screening process more efficient and enabling the monitors to be used for non-CBP related security. Currently, CBP has 850 stationary monitors that require containers be moved to the RPM location. In some environments—seaports, especially—this can be a time-consuming, cumbersome procedure.

Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, U.S. officials have developed programs and deployed technology to prevent terrorists and terrorist weapons from entering the country. Officials have been particularly concerned with terrorists smuggling radiological weapons or materials, given the grave consequences of an attack using these weapons. At the same time, officials do not want new security measures to unduly impede the flow of goods.

“The global economy and the import stream into the U.S. are an inviting target for terrorists,” said Commissioner Basham. “We must safeguard the commercial environment in a way that does not damage the U.S. and world economy.”

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control, and protection of our Nation's borders at and between the official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.

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